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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/50/48)]

50/6. Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations

The General Assembly

Adopts the following Declaration:

DECLARATION ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Fifty years ago the United Nations was born out of the sufferings caused by the Second World War. The determination, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" is as vital today as it was fifty years ago. In this, as in other respects, the Charter gives expression to the common values and aspirations of humankind.

The United Nations has been tested by conflict, humanitarian crisis and turbulent change, yet it has survived and played an important role in preventing another global conflict and has achieved much for people all over the world. The United Nations has helped to shape the very structure of relations between nations in the modern age. Through the process of decolonization and the elimination of apartheid, hundreds of millions of human beings have been and are assured the exercise of the fundamental right of self-determination.

At this time, following the end of the cold war, and as the end of the century approaches, we must create new opportunities for peace, development, democracy and cooperation. The speed and extent of change in today's world point to a future of great complexity and challenge and to a sharp increase in the level of expectations of the United Nations.

Our resolve on this historic occasion is clear. The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations must be seized as an opportunity to redirect it to greater service to humankind, especially to those who are suffering and are deeply deprived. This is the practical and moral challenge of our time. Our obligation to this end is found in the Charter. The need for it is manifest in the condition of humankind.

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we, the Member States and observers of the United Nations, representing the peoples of the world:

- Solemnly reaffirm the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our commitments to them;

- Express our gratitude to all men and women who have made the United Nations possible, done its work and served its ideals, particularly those who have given their lives during service to the United Nations;

- Are determined that the United Nations of the future will work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality and justice and understanding among the peoples of the world;

- Will give to the twenty-first century a United Nations equipped, financed and structured to serve effectively the peoples in whose name it was established.

In fulfilment of these commitments we will be guided in our future cooperation by the following, with respect to peace, development, equality, justice and the United Nations Organization:

PEACE

1. To meet these challenges, and while recognizing that action to secure global peace, security and stability will be futile unless the economic and social needs of people are addressed, we will:

- Promote methods and means for the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and enhance the capabilities of the United Nations in conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-building;

- Strongly support United Nations, regional and national efforts on arms control, limitation and disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in all aspects, and other weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical weapons and other forms of particularly excessively injurious or indiscriminate weapons, in pursuit of our common commitment to a world free of all these weapons;

- Continue to reaffirm the right of self-determination of all peoples, taking into account the particular situation of peoples under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, and recognize the right of peoples to take legitimate action in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to

realize their inalienable right of self-determination. This shall not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action that would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and thus possessed of a Government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction of any kind;

- Act together to defeat the threats to States and people posed by terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, and transnational organized crime and the illicit trade in arms and the production and consumption of and trafficking in illicit drugs;

- Strengthen consultation and cooperation between regional arrangements or agencies and the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

DEVELOPMENT

2. A dynamic, vigorous, free and equitable international economic environment is essential to the well-being of humankind and to international peace, security and stability. This objective must be addressed, in greater measure and more effectively, by the United Nations system.

3. The United Nations has played an important role in the promotion of economic and social development and has, over the years, provided life-saving assistance to women, children and men around the world. But the pledge recorded in the Charter that all Members of the United Nations shall take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development has not been adequately implemented.

4. It must be recognized that notwithstanding past efforts, the gap between the developed and developing countries remains unacceptably wide. The specific problems of countries with economies in transition with respect to their twofold transition to democracy and a market economy should also be recognized. In addition, accelerating globalization and interdependence in the world economy call for policy measures designed to ensure the maximization of the benefits from and the minimization of the negative effects of these trends for all countries.

5. Of greatest concern is that one fifth of the world's 5.7 billion people live in extreme poverty. Extraordinary measures by all countries, including strengthened international cooperation, are needed to address this and related problems.

6. In response to these facts and circumstances, the United Nations has convened a number of specifically focused global conferences in the last five years. From these conferences, a consensus has emerged, inter alia, that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development, which is the framework of our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. At the core of this consensus is the recognition that the human

person is the central subject of development and that people must be at the centre of our actions towards and concerns for sustainable development.

7. In this context, we reaffirm that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

8. In order to foster sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice in fulfilment of the commitments we have made on international cooperation for development, we will:

- Promote an open and equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system and a framework for investment, transfers of technology and knowledge, as well as enhanced cooperation in the areas of development, finance and debt as critical conditions for development;

- Give particular attention to national and international action to enhance the benefits of the process of globalization for all countries and to avoid the marginalization from and promote the integration of the least developed countries and countries in Africa into the world economy;

- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system for development and strengthen its role in all relevant fields of international economic cooperation;

- Invigorate the dialogue and partnership between all countries in order to secure the existence of a favourable political and economic environment for the promotion of international cooperation for development based on the imperatives of mutual benefit and interest and genuine interdependence, while recognizing that each country is ultimately responsible for its own development but reaffirming that the international community must create a supportive international environment for such development;

- Promote social development through decisive national and international action aimed at the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind and the promotion of full employment and social integration;

- Recognize that the empowerment and the full and equal participation of women is central to all efforts to achieve development;

- Reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies in order to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, recognizing that environmental sustainability constitutes an integral part of the development process;

- Intensify cooperation on natural disaster reduction and major technological and man-made disasters, disaster relief, post-disaster rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance in order

to enhance the capabilities of affected countries to cope with such situations.

EQUALITY

9. We reiterate the affirmation by the Charter of the dignity and worth of the human person and the equal rights of men and women and reaffirm that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

10. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the universal nature of which is beyond question. It is also important for all States to ensure the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of the consideration of human rights issues.

11. We will therefore:

- Promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are inherent to all human beings;

- Strengthen laws, policies and programmes that would ensure the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of political, civil, economic, social and cultural life as equal partners and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women;

- Promote and protect the rights of the child;

- Ensure that the rights of persons who can be particularly vulnerable to abuse or neglect, including youth, persons with disabilities, the elderly and migrant workers, are protected;

- Promote and protect the rights of indigenous people;

- Ensure the protection of the rights of refugees and of displaced persons;

- Ensure that the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic and other minorities are protected, and that such persons are able to pursue economic and social development and live in circumstances of full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization and cultural and religious values.

JUSTICE

12. The Charter of the United Nations has provided a durable framework for the promotion and development of international law. The continued promotion and development of international law must be pursued with a view to ensuring that relations between States are based on the principles of justice, sovereign equality, universally recognized principles of international law and respect for the rule of law. Such action should take account of developments under way in such areas as technology, transport, information and resource-related fields and international financial markets, as well as the growing

complexity of the work of the United Nations in the humanitarian and refugee assistance fields.

13. We are determined to:

- Build and maintain justice among all States in accordance with the principles of the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States;

- Promote full respect for and implementation of international law;

- Settle international disputes by peaceful means;

- Encourage the widest possible ratification of international treaties and ensure compliance with the obligations arising from them;

- Promote respect for and the implementation of international humanitarian law;

- Promote the progressive development of international law in the field of development, including that which would foster economic and social progress;

- Promote respect for and implementation of international law in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms and encourage ratification of or accession to international human rights instruments;

- Promote the further codification and progressive development of international law.

UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION

14. In order to be able to respond effectively to the challenges of the future and the expectations of the United Nations held by peoples around the world, it is essential that the United Nations itself be reformed and modernized. The work of the General Assembly, the universal organ of the States Members of the United Nations, should be revitalized. The Security Council should, inter alia, be expanded and its working methods continue to be reviewed in a way that will further strengthen its capacity and effectiveness, enhance its representative character and improve its working efficiency and transparency; as important differences on key issues continue to exist, further in-depth consideration of these issues is required. The role of the Economic and Social Council should be strengthened to enable it to carry out effectively, in the modern age, the tasks it has been assigned with respect to the well-being and standards of life of all people. These and other changes, within the United Nations system, should be made if we are to ensure that the United Nations of the future serves well the peoples in whose name it was established.

15. In order to carry out its work effectively, the United Nations must have adequate resources. Member States must meet, in full and on time, their obligation to bear the expenses of the Organization, as apportioned by the General Assembly. That apportionment should be established on the basis of criteria agreed to and considered to be fair by Member States.

16. The secretariats of the United Nations system must improve significantly their efficiency and effectiveness in administering and managing the resources allocated to them. For their part, Member States will pursue and take responsibility for reforming that system.

17. We recognize that our common work will be the more successful if it is supported by all concerned actors of the international community, including non-governmental organizations, multilateral financial institutions, regional organizations and all actors of civil society. We will welcome and facilitate such support, as appropriate.

40th plenary meeting
24 October 1995